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OUTLOOK NOTES

IN the *Bookman* for August, someone, presumably the accomplished and versatile editor, pitches into the summer school in good old fashioned style. "One of the most insidious inventions of the devil" is his conclusion of the whole matter so far as summer schools are concerned. "To go from his class room to a place where the same old grind in another form is still going on, to make one of a crowd of jaded, nervous, sensitive beings who are stewing in their own juice, and gabbling over and over the formulas of the educationist, so far from being a stimulus and an inspiration, is actually the undoing of a teacher, and sends him back to his work with a still further exhaustion of energy and enthusiasm and sympathy." This because "of all the professions, teaching is the most exhausting, and takes the most out of one's brain and nerve and general vitality." This indictment ought to have appeared in the May number when it might have done some good, or evil, in scaring teachers out of summer study. In August the matter is settled one way or the other, and by next year the counsels of the *Bookman* will, sad to think, be forgotten. That teaching is an exhausting profession teachers will not care to deny. Neither do most manly and womanly teachers care to prate about it all the while. Any strenuous labor is exhausting; more exhausting is labor done in a discontented spirit; most exhausting of all is labor beyond the capacity of the laborer, or to which the laborer has not fully adjusted himself, morally and mentally. Now we take it that a good many teachers are going to be happier, more comfortable, and less worried the coming year and for many years to come because of knowledge gained in the summer school this summer, knowledge they greatly needed in their teaching, and for the lack of which they have been worried and had nerves thrust upon them in the past. "I

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should be contented to teach all my life and die happy," said a teacher not so long ago, "if I could only meet Professor — once a year and hear him talk about the teacher's calling." Does not the inspiration gained in the summer school, the moral and mental readjustment to professional conditions more than make up for a partial loss of holiday? Summer work is seldom prolonged beyond half the long vacation, leaving still six or seven weeks for physical recreation. Not every teacher ought to study in the summer, and doubtless no teacher ought to study every summer. But the fact that some teachers do study every summer, and that any teacher may study any summer, gives to teaching one of its greatest advantages and chiefest charms.

Is there any reason why the words "commercial" and "business" should be in such bad odor in educational circles? Is it, perhaps, in Christian recognition of the fact that the word "education" is frequently in bad odor in business circles? The whole situation is a relic of barbarism, a curious survival of mediævalism in the most modern of modern times. Education then was solely for the scholars, clergymen mainly and a few professional men, between whom and the tradesmen there was a large gulf located. But now it is our proud boast that education is universal. So far have educators gone in disregarding the claims of the practical that a special class of institutions has developed, outside entirely of the recognized educational system, for training youth for commercial life, the so-called "business colleges," mainly institutions not colleges where business is not taught. Commercial courses are just creeping into our high schools, but these courses are poor, weak, emasculated things. A little shorthand or bookkeeping are sufficient to make a "course." What is needed is a good strong course, fully equal in thoroughness and content to any other course, taught by strong teachers, too; a course which shall include the history of commerce and industries, commercial geography, practical economics, transportation, finance and

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banking, commercial law, along with mathematics, history, English, and modern foreign languages. Boys now too often feel that it is not worth their while to go through the high school. Such studies as those mentioned would seem to them thoroughly worth while, and would help greatly to remove the inequality in the sexes in every high school graduating a class, an inequality that would be startling if we were not so thoroughly used to it.

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